

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-09

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9254

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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TAGS: PFOR, BG, CH, IN, PK, UR

SUBJECT: CHINA AND SOUTH ASIA

SUMMARY. WITH PRC MEDIA REPORTS CHARGING DELHI'S "BULLYING" OF DACCA, PEKING ONCE AGAIN SEEMS TO BE SIGNALLING CONCERN OVER INDIAN INTENTIONS TOWARD ITS SOUTH ASIAN NEIGHBORS. AS USUAL, THE REPORTS SEE THE SOVIETS AS CONTRIBUTING TO WORSENING INDO-BANGLADESH (BD) RELATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, NCNA HAS HAILED THE IMPROVING BD-PAKISTANI RELATIONSHIP AND HIGHLIGHTED CHINA'S OWN CLOSE TIES WITH PAKISTAN AND INCREASED RELATIONSHIP WITH BD. END SUMMARY.

1. PEKING'S TREATMENT OF THE OCTOBER 1975 SINO-INDIAN BORDER INCIDENT AND THE RECENT DEATH OF PRC MEDIA REPORTS ON DELHI'S DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUGGESTED CHINA'S
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DESIRE TO KEEP RELATIONS WITH INDIA ON A BACK BURNER AND

TO AVOID THEIR EXACERBATION. HOWEVER, RECENTLY PRC MEDIA HAVE RENEWED CRITICAL REPORTING ON INDIA, FOCUSING ON CHINA'S CONCERN ABOUT DELHI'S INTENTIONS TOWARD BD. NCNA HAS CITED BD GOVERNMENT AND PRESS CHARGES THAT INDIA IS:

(A) VIOLATING AN AGREEMENT ON THE DRAWING OF WATERS FROM THE GANGES RIVER AND THUS JEOPARDIZING THE BD ECONOMY AND

(B) PROVIDING SANCTUARY TO MISCREANTS WHO CROSS THE BD BORDER TO STIR UP TROUBLE. IN ADDITION TO THESE CHARGES, A HARD-HITTING PEOPLE'S DAILY COMMENTARY OF FEBRUARY 19 CONDEMNED INDIA'S "BULLYING" OF BD.

2. JUXTAPOSED WITH THIS TREATMENT, PRC MEDIA HAVE APPLAUDED THE IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN BD AND PAKISTAN, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS ASCRIBED DIRECTLY TO THE AUGUST 1975 COUP D'ETAT AND OVERTHROW OF THE MUJIBUR REGIME, AND IN A SCARCELY VEILED MANNER TO THE DECLINE OF INDIAN INFLUENCE IN DACCA. NCNA ALSO CITED PAKISTAN POLICIES AND PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO'S EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT A NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH DACCA.

3. AS USUAL, PEKING TAGS THE SOVIETS AS CONTRIBUTING TO THE TROUBLES AND "INCREASED TENSIONS" ON THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT. THE FEBRUARY 19 PD COMMENTARY ON INDIA'S "ACT OF TYRANNY" VIS-A-VIS BD REPEATED THE OLD AND FAMILIAR CHARGE THAT INDIAN RULERS ARE PURSUING AN EXPANSIONISTIC POLICY IN THE AREA UNDER THE SUPPORT AND INSTIGATION OF THE SOVIET REVISIONISTS. A COMPANION PD ARTICLE OF THE SAME DATE ON PAKISTAN DESCRIBED THE SOVIETS AS "OVERJOYED" BY THE NOVEMBER COUNTER-COUP ATTEMPT IN BD, IMPLIED THEIR UNHAPPINESS WITH THE PRESENT DACCA GOVERNMENT, AND CON-TENDED THAT THE SOVIETS ARE "FIERCELY ANGERED" BY IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BD. IT REPEATED A PAKISTANI URGING OF "THE NEED FOR UTMOST VIGILANCE AGAINST SOVIET SOCIAL-IMPERIALIST MANEUVERS TO USE OTHERS FOR INTERVENTION IN BD."

4. COMMENT: GIVEN CHINA'S LIMITED INFLUENCE ON THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT, THE PRC MEDIA TREATMENT REPRESENTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PEKING'S EFFORTS TO DEMONSTRATE ITS MORAL SUPPORT FOR THE CURRENT DACCA GOVERNMENT IN ITS TROUBLES WITH INDIA. ADDITIONALLY, IT REITERATES PEKING'S ABIDING CONCERN AND SUSPICION ABOUT INDO-SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE SUBCONTINENT. THIS SUDDEN SPATE OF PRC MEDIA ATTENTION TO INDO-BD PROBLEMS COMES AT THE SAME TIME AS THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A PROPOSED VISIT TO CHINA BY BHUTTO IN LATE MARCH. WE THEREFORE EXPECT A CONTINUATION OF SUCH

REPORTS AND ANTICIPATE THAT PEKING MIGHT USE THE BHUTTO
VISIT TO CONDEMN THE SOVIET INTENTIONS IN SOUTH ASIA
WITH CONSIDERABLE ANTI-INDIAN COMMENT BEING TOSSED IN.
CROSS

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